

Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District
Ranking Democrat, House Small Business Committee



Velázquez Bill To Help Small Business Recover

Small firms in New York hit hard after September 11th

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez introduced a major bill to aid the small businesses in New York and across the country that were affected by September's terrorist attacks on Manhattan and Virginia. Velázquez's legislation would provide low-cost or no-cost loans for disaster recovery. And it would provide for total loan forgiveness if debt and the effects of Sept. 11 threaten to bankrupt a business.

In addition, Congresswoman Velázquez's bill addresses some of the unique problems facing New York by providing a more flexible definition of "small business" to better reflect the true composition of New York's many small enterprises. The definition will include the City's financial institutions and non-profit organizations, which currently do not qualify for Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loans.

Velázquez's bill will change the SBA disaster loan program to allow businesses anywhere that can show a setback as a result of the terrorist attacks to qualify for economic injury disaster loans. This would help thousands of businesses across the country.

"Small businesses are the foundation of our economy, our communities, and our neighborhoods," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "It is vital that we move to help them. That is what my bill would do."



Congresswoman Velázquez receives an award for fighting on behalf of small and minority businesses. She is standing with Rep. Charles Rangel (left) and Rep. Gregory Meeks.

Velázquez Encourages College Dreams

Students learn about aid for higher education at forum

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez co-hosted a college finance forum with Sallie Mae last month, helping students to understand how a university education is possible -- and affordable.

Sallie Mae is the largest student loan provider in the country. During the forum, students who are thinking about college and worried about paying for it learned about grants, scholarships and low-cost loans that can help pave the way to higher education.

"When I was growing up, not many people thought it was possible that I could go to college," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "But a university education was possible, and allowed me to become a college teacher and then a Member of Congress."

If you would like to talk to someone about financing college, contact Sallie Mae at 1-800-239-4269.



Congresswoman Velázquez congratulates Maureen Pascal (left) and Diana Torres, who both won \$500 scholarship certificates for attending the Sallie Mae forum last month.

Velázquez Hosts American Citizenship Drives

Forums this month help applicants begin naturalization

Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez will host two Citizenship Drives Nov. 3 and 10 to help people who want to become American citizens.

“Becoming an American citizen can be a long and confusing process,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “But it is very rewarding, too. I want to help people learn about becoming an American citizen. We can make it happen!”

The first Citizenship Drive will be held Sat. Nov. 3 from 12 p.m.-3 p.m., at the IS 291’s Beacon Program, 231 Palmetto Avenue in Bushwick Brooklyn.

The second Drive will be held Sat., Nov. 10 from 12 p.m. - 3 p.m. at the Missionary Church of Brooklyn, 734 Jamaica Ave. in Cypress Hills, Brooklyn.

Applicants must meet several INS requirements before filing for citizenship. In addition, you are encouraged to call ahead about several documents you will need to have with you to complete an application. A \$5 fee is charged to complete the application. The INS submission fee is \$250. These fees will increase next year, so apply now!

You are welcome to come and learn about the process.

Contact Allison Bowles at 1-718-599-3658 for more information about what to bring to the workshop.



Congresswoman Velázquez meets with Maria and Artur Brwinowski after Artur received his “Green Card” certifying permanent residence. It is the first step towards U.S. citizenship!

Velázquez Delivers Democratic Radio Address

Discusses airport security, economic stimulus, aid to small businesses

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez delivered the Democratic radio address last month to discuss the state of the country after the events of September 11.

The Congresswoman stressed the need for strong airport security, legislation to help our damaged economy get going again, and aid to small businesses.

“On Tuesday, September 11th, countless lives faded into darkness,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “But in the midst of the darkness, there were some bright spots that included acts of heroism, an outpouring of support, and millions wanting to help by giving blood, providing

food, or searching for survivors. That is what makes our nation strong.

“Of great concern is helping those workers who have lost their jobs. Democrats have a proposal that would ensure these displaced workers are eligible for financial assistance, training and healthcare coverage.

“Just like the airlines, small businesses also need financial help from our government. We are hard at work on proposals to aid these businesses by providing them with low- or no-cost loans, grants and other measures to provide them with some short-term relief.”

More Federal Money Secured to Fight Sweatshops

Bill increases spending to investigate, punish labor abuses

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez helped win a \$1.5 million increase in additional funding to fight sweatshop working conditions in New York and across the country.

This increase is dedicated for law enforcement at the Department of Labor Employment Standards Administration.

In September, Congresswoman Velázquez participated in a rally against sweatshops and for garment

workers in New York.

The House of Representatives passed a \$153 million bill to fund the fight against sweatshops. This includes Congresswoman Velázquez’s increase over last year.

The Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) maintains a web site for consumer news about fashion retailers and sweatshop conditions that can be viewed on the World Wide Web at www.behindthelabel.org.

Grants Awarded to Our Community

Office of the District Atty., Kings Co.....\$400,000	N.Y.C. Board of Education.....\$955,584
Supports substance abuse and mental health services	Supports Teaching American History Program
N.Y.C. Board of Education.....\$159,268	UPROSE, Inc.....\$14,000
Supports bilingual education and implementation programs	Supports community environmental education